

**PRESS RELEASE JUNE 9th, 2009:**

## **Inhabitants of the cultural capital:**

**- An appropriate priority which gave us new experiences**



**An overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Rogaland, 74% in the four municipalities of Northern Jæren (Stavanger, Sandnes, Sola and Randaberg), and 70% in the rest of Rogaland, believes it was appropriate for the Stavanger Region to apply to be a European capital of culture in 2008.**

**A total of 75% of the Northern Jæren inhabitants participated as audience in one or more of the events. 42% attended three or more events, while 9% were involved as actors, hosts or volunteers. A third of those questioned in the rest of Rogaland were involved as audience or actor/volunteer.**

These results appear from two comprehensive surveys carried out as part of a large research project on Stavanger as a European capital of culture. The project is carried out by the International Research Institute of Stavanger (IRIS) and the University of Stavanger.

In the period between February and April this year Synovate interviewed more than 2400 people aged 15 or older. The interviews were done by telephone. Approximately half of these also responded to a postal questionnaire. Prior to the roll-out of the programme of events for the cultural capital a similar survey was carried out, during autumn 2007. At that time 2300 telephone-interviews were made, and 1300 people filled in questionnaires.

62% of those asked in Stavanger, Sandnes, Sola and Randaberg answered that they had attended either the opening or the closing ceremony of the cultural capital. This was slightly more than those who had attended the large food festival ('Gladmat') in 2008 (59%). Almost everybody, respectively 96% and 95%, had heard about these events. In the rest of Rogaland, excluding Northern Jæren, a few more had heard about 'Gladmat' (89%) than had heard about the opening/closing ceremony of the cultural capital.

Children and young people were targeted specially by Stavanger2008. In Northern Jæren 31% of those who answered, had a child/youth who had somehow participated in the events of the cultural capital. In the rest of Rogaland, this figure was 12%.

74% in Northern Jæren and 35% in the rest of Rogaland said that at least one of their children had attended one or more of the events in the cultural capital, as audience.

A total of 78% of the asked in Stavanger, Sandnes, Sola and Randaberg agreed completely or partly that the cultural capital created a good atmosphere in the city and

the region. 55% of the asked in the rest of Rogaland agreed, completely or partly, in this.

A majority of the inhabitants in Northern Jæren agreed partly (32%) or completely (26%) that the cultural capital meant little or nothing to the general public, and that it primarily was a happening for the elite. At the same time, 64% agreed more or less that the cultural capital had given them experiences they otherwise wouldn't have gotten. 29% said the same in the rest of Rogaland.

When asked what they believe of the costs, about a third, both in Northern Jæren (35%) and in the rest of Rogaland (32%), answered that they believed too much money were spent on the cultural capital.

During the autumn of 2007, the inhabitants of Rogaland expressed great expectations to the effects of the cultural capital on the Stavanger region. Once the year of being cultural capital was history, the opinions were somewhat more down-to-earth. In 2007, 88% of the inhabitants in Northern Jæren believed the cultural capital would give the region important new impulses.

The same number expected the cultural life in the region to be strengthened by the cultural capital. In 2009 this percentage was reduced to 79%. There is also a reduction in the number of inhabitants who agreed that the cultural capital would make / had made the region better known in Norway and Europe, and more attractive to tourists, students and job-seekers.